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8 December 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: New Planning Group

1. On Thursday, 8 December, I attended the first meeting of the new planning group established as a result of Mr. Henry Owen's discussions with, among others, Mr. Walt Rostow. The group is to be chaired by Mr. Joseph Yager (Owen's deputy) and will consist of Mr. Yager; Mr. Richard Steadman, ISA; Brig. General Theodore H. Andrews, USA of J-5, and myself. To facilitate correspondence and phone conversations among ourselves without revealing the subjects we are dealing with, we decided to term ourselves the "Wednesday Group".

2. The first order of business will be drafting our terms of reference for submission to our respective principals and to the White House. Basically we are charged with canvassing all possible alternate modes of waging war in Vietnam. As we understand it, there is to be no limit on the kinds of ideas we can consider.

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3. Knowledge of the group's existence and the subjects it discusses is to be very tightly held. Members will draw on the resources of their respective agencies but are supposed to do so in a manner that will keep the full range of this committee's work from becoming general knowledge. I will rely primarily, at least at the outset, on my own staff, which covers a broad spectrum of specialist expertise.

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4. The object is to have an initial survey completed by the end of this month and a final report ready for submission by mid-March. At some time in between the group will probably go to CINCPAC and Saigon for detailed discussions with appropriate offices in both places. For the moment, however, neither CINCPAC nor the U.S. Mission is apprised of this exercise. I will, of course, keep you fully informed as our work progresses.

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